DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 445 824 PS 028 927

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|---|---|
| TITLE | The Safe Nursery: A Booklet To Help Avoid Injuries from Nursery Furniture and Equipment. |
| INSTITUTION | Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, DC. |
| PUB DATE | 2000-09-00 |
| NOTE | 21p. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Office of Information and Public Affairs, Washington, DC 20207; Tel: 301-504-0580; Web Site: http://www.cpsc.gov (Document No. 202). |
| PUB TYPE | Guides - Non-Classroom (055) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC01 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Child Safety; Furniture; Home Furnishings; *Infants; *Injuries; *Prevention; *Risk Management; *Safety |

ABSTRACT

Noting that parents and caregivers of infants and young children need to be aware of many potential hazards in the child's environment, this booklet provides assistance in buying nursery products, using them safely, and keeping them in good repair. The following furnishings and equipment are discussed: (1) cribs and crib toys; (2) bathing aids, buckets, and pails; (3) gates and enclosures; (4) high chairs; (5) play pens; (6) rattles, squeeze toys, and teethers; (7) toy chests; (8) walkers; (9) back carriers; (10) bassinets and cradles; (11) carrier seats; (12) hook-on chairs; (13) changing tables; (14) pacifiers; and (15) strollers and carriages. The booklet concludes with a list of general household tips and a safe nursery checklist to use as a guide when buying new or second-hand nursery products. (KB)

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# The Safe Nursery

A booklet to help avoid injuries from nursery furniture and equipment

PS 028927

U.S. Consumer Product
Safety Commission
Washington, DC 20207



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# Introduction

**A** is for Awareness . . .
of parents and caretakers about potential hazards in the child's environment, including nursery products.

**B** is for Baby.

**C** is for Caution . . .
in selecting and maintaining products for the child's environment, including nursery products.

**S** is for Safety . . .
the sum of the A B C's.

From the beginning of a child's life, products intended for a child must be selected with safety in mind. Parents and caretakers of babies and young children need to be aware of many potential hazards in the child's environment hazards from incorrect use of products or with products not well designed for their intended purpose. The Consumer Product Safety Commission hopes this booklet, with its selected safety hints, will be your ABC primer helping you buy nursery products, using them, keeping them in good repair, and properly disposing of a product if it becomes a hazard. The Commission has several ways to keep you informed. The Commission publishes Safety Alerts and recall notices, has a Hotline service (1-800-638-2772, TTY: 1-800-638-8270) and has a Website page (www.cpsc.gov). CPSC can also send you information for hosting a Baby Safety Shower, a great way to inform new parents how to protect their babies from harm in their own homes.

# Major Hazards

## Cribs

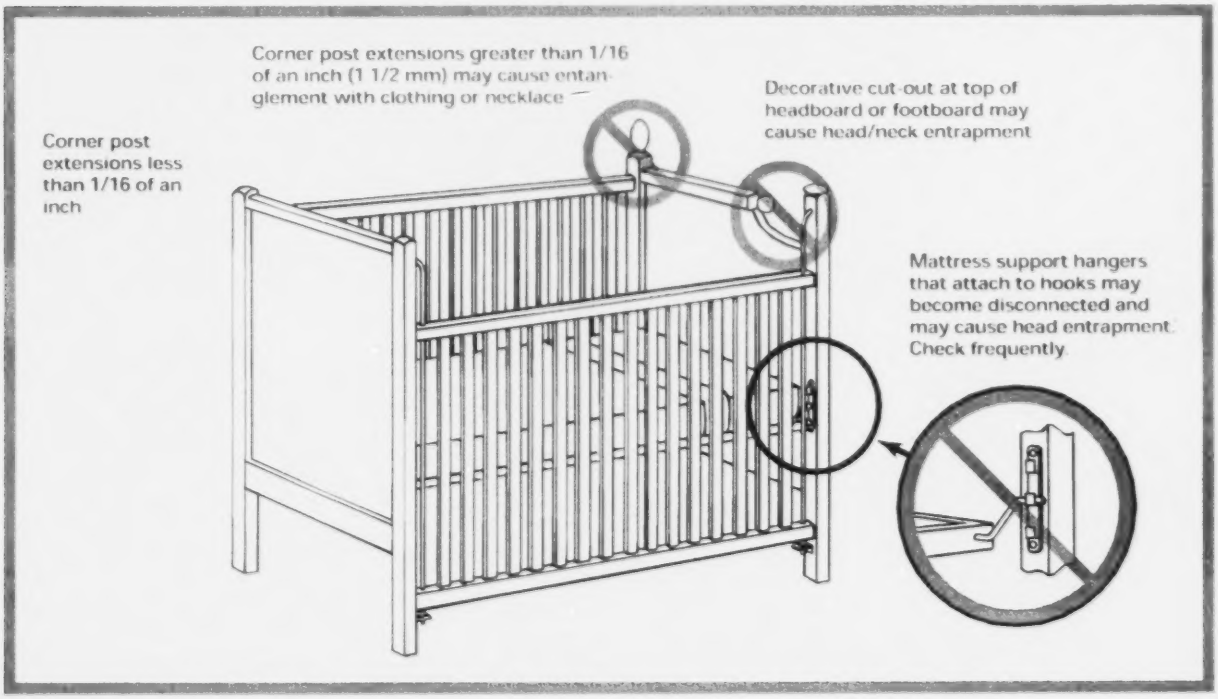
More infants die every year in accidents involving cribs than with any other nursery product. Thousands of infants are injured seriously enough to require treatment in hospital emergency rooms.

**If You're Buying a New Full-Size Crib**

1. Corner posts should not extend more than 1/16 inch (1 1/2 mm) above the top of the end panel. Corner posts can be catchpoints for items placed around a child's neck or clothing worn by the child.
2. Mattress support hangers should be secured by bolts or closed hooks. All crib hardware should be securely tightened and checked frequently.
3. Bumper pads, if used, should (a) fit around the entire crib, (b) tie or snap into place, and (c) have straps or ties at least in each corner, in the middle of each long side, and on both the top and the bottom edges. To prevent your baby from becoming entangled in the ties, trim off excess length after tying. Use the bumpers until the baby can pull up to a standing position, then remove them so that the baby will not use them to try to climb out of the crib.
4. Remove and destroy all plastic wrapping materials. Never use plastic bags as mattress covers. The plastic film may cling to a baby's face and cause suffocation.

**If You Already Have a Crib**

1. CPSC discourages the use of used cribs. Use a crib that meets Federal safety regulations and industry voluntary standards (ASTM) and make sure it has a tight fitting mattress. Check the labeling on these products to make sure they meet safety requirements.
2. Check the crib and replace any missing parts, such as screws, bolts or mattress support hangers, before placing your child in it. Make sure all screws or bolts are securely tightened. Any screw inserted into a wood component that cannot be tightened securely should be replaced by one that fits. On cribs where the mattress support is suspended by hangers attached to hooks on the end panels, check frequently to be sure they have not become disconnected. Never use a crib with broken or missing parts.
3. Use a mattress that fits tightly. If you can fit more than two fingers between the edge of the mattress and crib side, the mattress is too small. An infant can suffocate if its head or body becomes wedged between the mattress and the crib sides.


Corner post extensions greater than 1/16 of an inch (1 1/2 mm) may cause entanglement with clothing or necklace
Corner post extensions less than 1/16 of an inch
Decorative cut-out at top of headboard or footboard may cause head/neck entrapment
Mattress support hangers that attach to hooks may become disconnected and may cause head entrapment. Check frequently.



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4. Avoid older cribs with headboard and footboard designs that may allow an infant's head to become caught in the openings between the corner post and the top rail, or in other openings in the top edge of the headboard structure. These openings may lead to strangulation.

5. Corner posts should be less than 1/16 inches high. (1-1/2 mm) unless the crib has a canopy. Do not use a crib that has decorative knobs on corner posts. If you already have a crib with such knobs, the knobs should be unscrewed or sawed off flush with the headboard or footboard. Sand off splinters and sharp corners.

6. Never use a crib that has loose or missing slats. Be sure that all slats are securely fastened in place and the space between slats is no more than 2-3/8 inches (60 mm) to avoid head entrapment/strangulation.

7. If you paint or refinish the crib, use only high quality household lead-free enamel paint and let it dry thoroughly so there are no residual fumes. Check the label on the paint can to make sure the manufacturer does not recommend against using the paint on items such as cribs.

**Some Safety Tips**

1. To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and prevent suffocation, put your baby to sleep on his/her back in a crib on a firm, flat mattress. Make sure there is no soft bedding underneath your baby.

2. Temporary beds: Never place your infant to sleep on an adult bed, water bed, or bunk bed. Infants up to 18 months can suffocate in their sleep when their bodies or faces become wedged between the mattress and bed frame or the mattress and wall.

3. Never put a crib, child bed, or furniture near window blinds or drapery. Children can strangle on window cords or can fall through screens. If local fire codes permit window guards, install them. Make sure that all drapery or window blind cords are out of the child's reach. CPSC has received numerous reports of strangulation deaths on window blind cords over the years. To keep cords out of reach of children, use these devices: clamp or clothes pin, tie the cord to itself, tie-down device, or take the cord loop and cut it in half to make two separate cords.

4. Never use strings to hang any object, such as a mobile or a toy or a diaper bag, on or near the crib where a child could become caught in it and strangle. If you have toys with cords or elastic for hanging, cut the strings/cords off.

5. To prevent strangulation, NEVER tie pacifiers/teethers around your child's neck. Remove bibs and necklaces whenever you put your baby in crib or playpen.

6. Always lock the side rail in its raised position whenever you place your child in the crib. As soon as your child can stand up, adjust the mattress to its lowest position and remove the bumper pads. Also, remove any large toys—an active toddler will use anything for climbing out of the crib.

7. When your child reaches 35 inches (890 mm) in height, he/she has outgrown the crib and should sleep in a bed.

8. Never use plastic bags as mattress covers. The plastic film may cause suffocation.

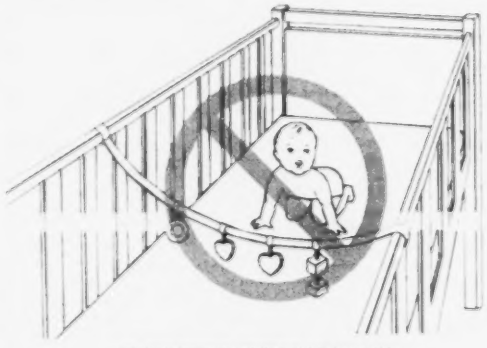
9. Check all crib hardware: tighten all nuts, bolts, and screws frequently. After a crib is moved, be sure all mattress support hangers are secure. Check hooks regularly to be sure none are broken or bent. Open hooks may allow the mattress to fall.

10. Secure bumper pads around the entire crib and snap or tie in place at least in each corner, in the middle of each long side, and on both the top and the bottom edges. Cut off any excess string length.

## CRIB TOYS

Crib gyms and other toys that stretch across the crib with strings, cords or ribbons can be a hazard for older or more active babies. The Commission knows of cases in which infants strangled or became entangled in crib gyms or other toys stretched across their cribs.

- Make sure that crib gyms are installed securely at both ends so they cannot be pulled down into the crib.
- Make sure that you remove crib gyms and mobiles from the crib when your baby is 5 months old or begins to push up on hands and knees.
- Mobiles and any other toys that hang over a crib or playpen should be out of reach of a child.
- Do not use crib toys with catch points that can hook clothing.



**STRANGULATION HAZARD**

Remove *all* crib toys which are strung across crib or playpen area when your child is *beginning to push up on hands and knees or is 5 months of age*, whichever comes earliest

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# Bathing Aids, Buckets & Pails

## BATHING AIDS

Water presents a real danger: NEVER, even for a moment, leave your child alone or under sibling supervision in the bathtub, even when the child is in a bath ring or seat. Bath rings are intended for use as bath aids, but they are NOT SAFETY DEVICES! Keep children away from buckets, toilets, pools and other containers of water. Young children can drown quickly in small amounts of water. Hot water can scald. To prevent skin burns always check bath water temperature with your wrist or elbow before bathing your baby.

**Safety Tips**

1. Never, even for a moment, rely on bath rings or seats to keep baby safe in the bath. Never leave a baby alone in a bath ring or seat in the tub. Never rely on a sibling to supervise a baby in a bath tub. Turning away to get a towel, answer the doorbell or telephone could result in the baby drowning.
2. All necessary bathing items (soap, washcloths, towels, etc.) should be placed by the tub before your baby goes in.
3. Only fill the tub with enough water to cover the baby's legs. This amount of water is sufficient to bathe the baby. However, be aware that babies can drown in a very small amount of water. All it takes is enough water to cover the nose and mouth.
4. Securely attach bath seats and rings to a SMOOTH SURFACE. Suction cups will NOT stick to textured, ridged, appliqued, or factory designed non-skid bathtub surfaces. Suction cups will not stick to scratched, chipped, or repainted tub surfaces.
5. Parents and caregivers should be trained in basic CPR techniques.

## BUCKETS & PAILS

Young children will get into everything! The Commission has many reports of children who were able to pull themselves to a standing position (around 7 months), fall head first into an open pail and drown.

**Safety Tips**

- Keep diaper pails tightly closed, and out of the reach of young children.
- Never use open buckets as diaper pails or leave open buckets containing liquids where children can reach them. They pose a drowning hazard.

**⚠ WARNING**

Prevent Drowning. Never Leave Child Unattended.



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# Baby Gates

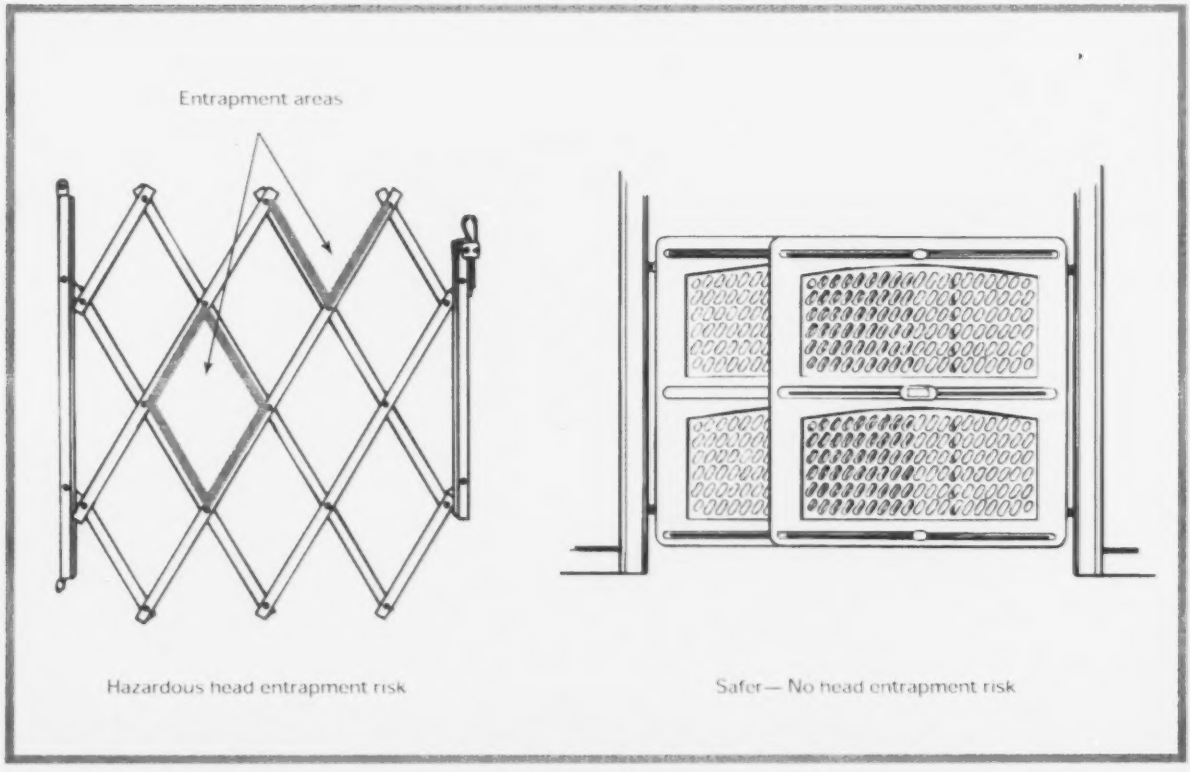
Baby gates are used at the top and bottom of stairs or in open doorways to prevent toddlers from falling or entering unsafe areas. But some baby gates themselves are dangerous. The Commission warns parents and others who care for children that an entrapment and strangulation hazard exists with accordion-style baby gates that have large V-shaped openings along the top edge and diamond-shaped openings between the slats. CPSC knows of deaths that occurred when children's heads were entrapped in the V-shaped or diamond-shaped openings when they attempted to crawl through or over the gates. Although these hazardous accordion-style baby gates have not been sold since 1985, you may still find them at yard sales or in thrift stores.

**If You Will Be Using a Baby Gate**

- Choose a gate with a straight top edge and rigid bars or mesh screen, or an accordion-style gate with small V-shapes and diamond-shaped openings. Entrances to V-shapes should be no more than 1-1/2 inches (38 mm) in width to prevent head entrapment.
- Be sure the baby gate is securely anchored in the doorway or stairway it is blocking. Children have pushed gates over and fallen down stairs.
- Gates that are retained with an expanding pressure bar should be installed with this bar on the side away from the child. A pressure bar may be used as a toehold by a child to climb over a gate. Pressure gates are not recommended at the top of stairways. CPSC is aware of a number of incidents where pressure gates have popped out of openings at the top of stairs resulting in children falling down stairs.

## EXPANDABLE ENCLOSURES

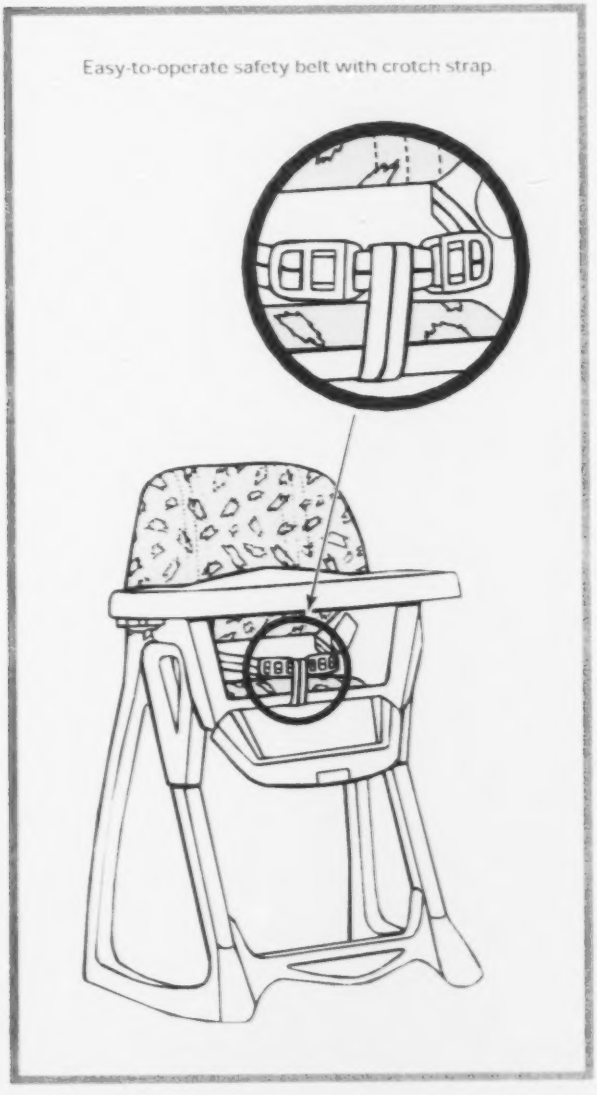
Circular wooden enclosures that expand, accordion-style, can present the same entrapment/strangulation hazards as the accordion-style gates. The Commission knows of deaths that occurred when children caught their necks in the V-shaped openings along the top edge of the enclosure, apparently as they were attempting to climb out. CPSC recommends that you DO NOT USE ACCORDION-STYLE EXPANDABLE ENCLOSURES with V-shaped or diamond-shaped openings.



# High Chairs

Each year, thousands of children are treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with high chairs. Deaths also occur. The majority of the injuries result from falls when restraining straps are not used and when children are not closely supervised. The majority of deaths occurred when children slipped down under the tray and strangled. Most often, these children were either unrestrained or were restrained only by a waist belt.

To help prevent injuries and deaths, high chairs should have a waist strap and a strap that runs between the legs. While in the high chair, children should ALWAYS be restrained by both straps. The tray should not be used as a restraining device in place of the straps.



Easy-to-operate safety belt with crotch strap.

Without these two straps, children can stand in the chair seat and topple from the chair, or slide under the tray and strangle on the waist strap or when their heads become trapped between the tray and the chair seat.

Other accidents occur when the chair tips over. High chairs may tip if an active child pushes off from a table or wall, stands up in the high chair, or rocks it back and forth.

**If You Are Buying a New High Chair**

1. Select one that has a wide base for stability.
2. Examine the restraining straps to ensure that the waist belt has a buckle that cannot be fastened unless the crotch strap is also used.
3. Since the restraining straps must be used every time a child is placed in the chair, look for straps that are easy to use. If the straps are difficult to fasten, you might not use them.
4. Consider a high chair that has a post between the child's legs to prevent the child from slipping down and becoming trapped under the tray.

**If You Already Have a High Chair or Are Buying One Secondhand**

1. Check the condition of straps and their attachments to make sure they are securely attached and work properly.
2. If the high chair does not have adequate safety straps, contact the manufacturer for replacement.

**Safety Tips**

1. ALWAYS USE ALL RESTRAINING STRAPS PROVIDED. The crotch strap and belt around the waist should be fastened as soon as a child is placed in the chair and unfastened only when the child is removed. Remember, the feeding tray is not a restraint. Only safety straps keep the child from climbing out or sliding down and strangling.
2. Be sure that the locking device on a folding high chair is locked each time you set up the chair.
3. Never allow a child to stand up in a high chair.
4. Don't stray too far from the high chair especially if the child has shown an ability to unfasten safety straps.
5. Keep the high chair far enough away from a table, counter, wall, or other surface so that a child can't use them to push off.
6. Don't let children play around a high chair or climb into it unassisted.
7. Don't let older children hang on to a high chair while a baby is in it. The high chair could tip over.

# Playpens

Deaths have occurred when the drop-sides of mesh playpens and cribs were left in the down position. When a mesh side is left down, the mesh hangs loosely, forming a pocket or gap between the edge of the floor panel and the side. Young infants, even a few weeks old can move to the edge and fall into the loose mesh pocket where they can be trapped and suffocate.

New mesh-sided playpens with drop-sides have warning labels that alert parents and others never to leave infants in playpens with sides in the down position. Be aware that older mesh playpens or cribs do not have these warning labels. Many of these products are still in use.

Deaths have also occurred in playpens or travel cribs that have a rotating hinge in the center of each top rail to enable the product to be folded into a compact package. These deaths resulted when the top rails collapsed and formed an acute 'V' shape that entrapped the child's neck. In the entrapment incidents, the hinges were either not turned inward and down or they somehow rotated during use to the unlocked position. CPSC has recalled several brands of playpens with these rotating latches in the center of the top rails.

Some playpens or travel cribs have a hinge at the center of each top rail with a latching mechanism that locks automatically when the rail is lifted into the normal use position. To fold these products, a button or other release mechanism must be used to release the latch. Such products, while similar in appearance to those with rotating hinges, are not known to have been involved in any fatal entrapment incidents.

**If You Are Buying a New Playpen**

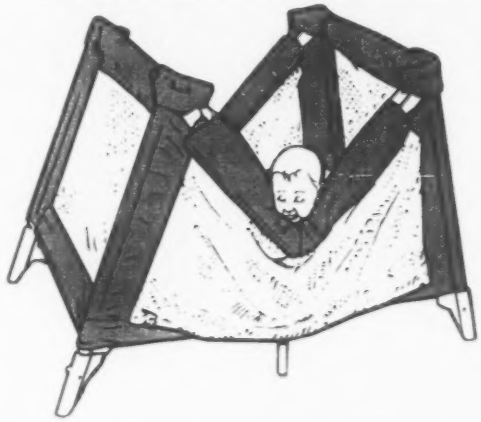
1. For playpens with a hinge in the center of each of the four top rails, look for a playpen or travel crib that has top rails that automatically lock when lifted into the normal use position.
2. Look for mesh netting with a very small weave (less than 1/4 inch)—smaller than the tiny buttons on a baby's clothing.
3. Slat spaces on a wooden playpen should be no more than 2-3/8 inches (60 mm) in width.

**If You Already Have a Playpen or Are Buying One Secondhand**

1. Check the slat spacing on older, wooden playpens. The Commission does not recommend using it if the space between slats is more than 2-3/8 inches (60 mm).
2. Check to see if it has a hinge at the center of each top rail that must be turned toward the inside of the crib and down to prevent folding. CPSC does not recommend that you use this type of product.

**Safety Tips**

1. Always show babysitter/caregiver how to properly set up playpen according to the manufacturer's instructions. Improper setup can cause the playpen to collapse, resulting in injury or death to the child.
2. Never leave an infant in a mesh playpen or crib with the drop-side down. Infants can roll into the space between the mattress and loose mesh side and suffocate. Even when a child is not in a playpen, leave the drop-side up. Children may try to climb back into a playpen and cut or pinch their fingers on the unlocked hinge mechanism.
3. Remove large toys, bumper pads, or boxes from inside the playpen. They can be used for climbing out.
4. Avoid tying any items across the top or corner of the playpen; they can be a strangulation hazard.



Playpen must be securely locked into open position so it cannot collapse.

Side in lowered position forms hazardous "pocket" or "gap."

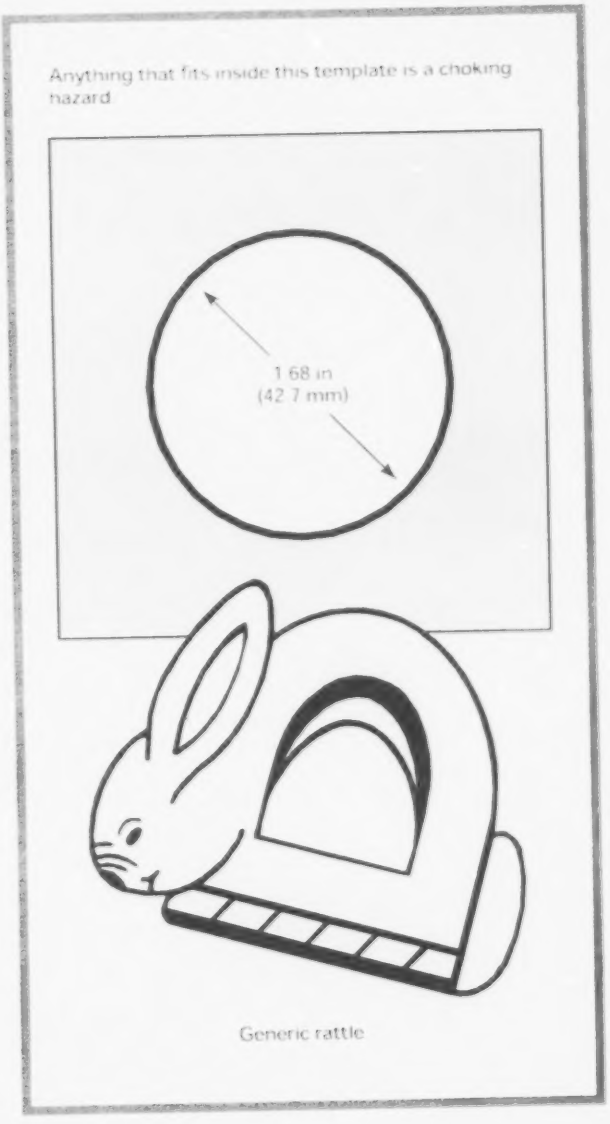
5. Toys should not be hung from the sides with strings or cords because they could wrap around a child's neck. Use another method for attaching the toys to the playpen.
6. Children may use the top rail of the playpen for teething. Check vinyl or fabric-covered rails frequently for holes and tears. A teething child can chew off pieces and choke.
7. If staples are used to attach the mesh side to the floor plate, make sure none are loose or missing.
8. Examine the mesh and its attachment to the top rail and floor frequently for loose threads. There have been reports of entanglements in threads (stitching) that unraveled.
9. Never use a playpen with holes in the mesh sides. These could entrap a child's head and cause strangulation.
10. Never use a playpen with a hinge in the center of each of the four top rails that fold if each top rail does not automatically lock when the rail is lifted into the normal use position.
11. Never use a pad that does not fit snugly and never add a second pad or mattress. Babies have suffocated when trapped between mattresses or between the playpen side and mattress that was too small.

# Rattles/Squeeze Toys/Teethers

Because children have choked to death on baby rattles, the Commission issued a regulation in 1978 requiring 1) that rattles be large enough to prevent them from becoming lodged in an infant's throat and 2) that they be sturdily constructed to prevent them from separating into small pieces that can be swallowed or inhaled. To date, the largest rattle known to have lodged in an infant's mouth/throat had an end about the size of a golf ball. Squeeze toys and teethers have been involved in similar choking incidents. Rattles, squeeze toys and teethers involved in incidents had handles or ends small enough to enter a baby's mouth and lodge in the throat, blocking the airway.

## Safety Tips

1. Check all rattles, squeeze toys and teethers for small ends that could extend into the back of the baby's mouth. If you feel that the toy may be too small for safety, throw it away.
2. Take rattles, squeeze toys, teethers, and other small objects out of the crib or playpen when the baby sleeps.
3. Teethers, like pacifiers, should never be fastened around a baby's neck.
4. Avoid rattles and squeeze toys with ball-shaped ends.



Generic rattle

# Toy Chests

CPSC has received reports of death and brain damage as a result of toy chest lids falling on children's heads or necks. These chests include those specifically manufactured for toy storage, as well as trunks, wicker chests, wooden storage chests, and other similar items.

Most of the children were under two years of age.–Accidents occurred when children were reaching over and into the chest when the lid dropped, either falling on their heads or trapping them at the neck between the lid and the edge of the toy chest.

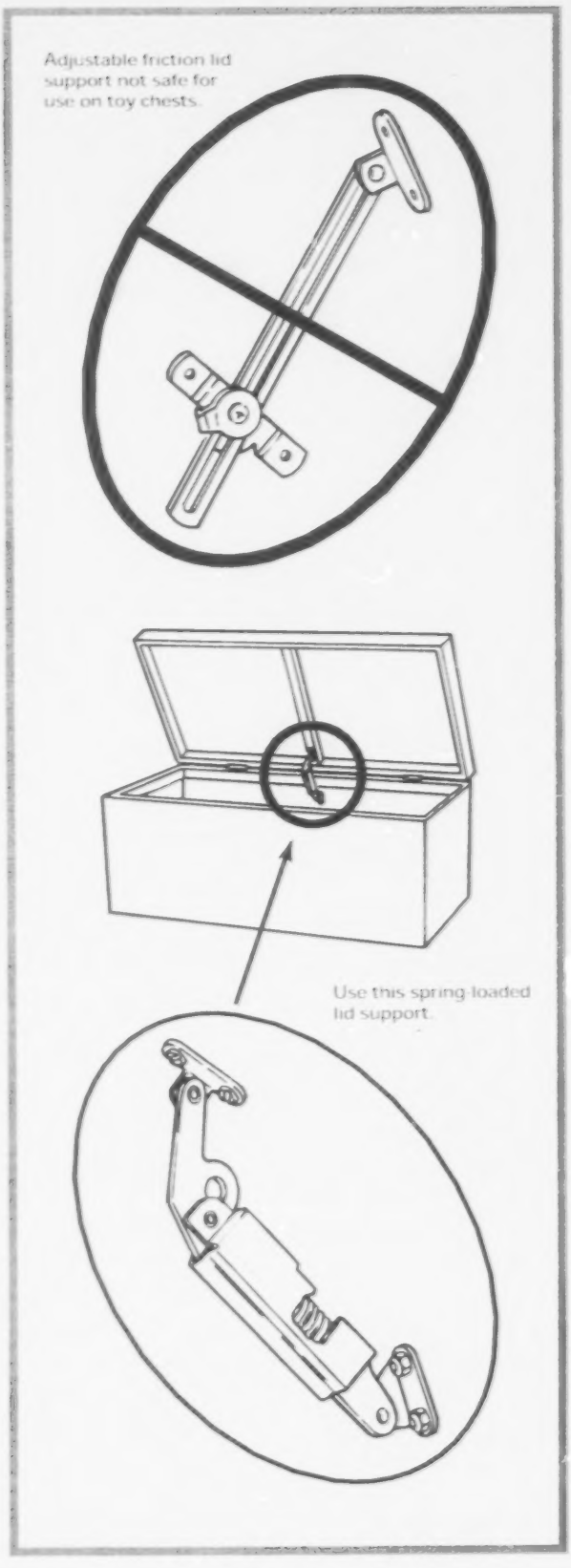
Another potentially fatal, but less frequent, hazard is suffocation, which has resulted in the deaths of several children. These accidents happened when children climbed into toy chests to hide

or sleep. Because the toy chests were not adequately ventilated, the children suffocated in the enclosed space.

**If You Are Buying a New Toy Chest**

1. Look for one that has a support that will hold the hinged lid open in any position in which it is placed or buy one with a detached lid or doors.
2. Look for a toy chest with ventilation holes that will not be blocked if the chest is placed against the wall, or a chest which, when closed, has a gap between the lid and the sides of the chest. Many chests are ventilated by a space between the underside of the lid and sides or front of the box.
3. Make certain that the lid of the toy chest does not have a latch.

If you already own a toy chest or trunk with a freely falling lid, CPSC recommends that you REMOVE THE LID to avoid possible tragedy. Otherwise, you may wish to install a lid support device designed to hold the lid open in any position. Buy a spring-loaded lid support that will not require periodic adjustment.



# Walkers

The Commission estimates that more children are injured in baby walkers than with any other nursery product. The accidents happen even when a caregiver is nearby. Almost all of the victims are children under 15 months of age.

Most of the injuries are caused by:

- Falling down stairs—Children in baby walkers can quickly move to the edge of the stairs and fall. This kind of accident frequently happens when someone forgets to close a basement door or safety gate.
- Tipping over—Baby walkers can tip over when children try to cross uneven surfaces such as door thresholds or carpet edges.
- Burns— Children in baby walkers can be burned when they touch hot surfaces such as range doors, radiators, heaters, and fireplaces. Children can also be burned when they reach and spill hot liquids such as soup, coffee, or cooking oil.

**You May Want to Use an Activity Center Instead of a Walker**

In an activity center your child will be protected from most injuries associated with baby walkers. Some activity centers are stationary; others allow your child to walk within a limited area.

**If You Plan to Use a Walker**

It is important to buy a new walker that has safety features to help prevent falls down stairs. However, it is not possible to find a product that is safe in every situation. Therefore, it is very important to follow all safety instructions on the warning labels.

**Safety Tips**

1. To prevent accidents, always keep your child within view. A walker increases your child's mobility and his/her reach.
2. To avoid a fall down stairs or steps, make certain that the door or gate is closed at the top of the stairs every time you use a walker.
3. To avoid a tipover, use a walker only on smooth surfaces. Carpet edges, thresholds, and uneven pavement can cause a child in walkers to tip over.
4. To avoid a burn injury, keep your child in a walker away from hot surfaces and containers with hot liquids. Beware of dangling appliance cords.
5. To avoid a drowning, keep your child in a walker away from swimming pools, toilets, and other sources of water.

# Other Hazards

## Back Carriers

An infant back carrier can make it easier to go shopping, walking, or hiking with a baby. However, framed back carriers should not be used before a baby is four to five months old. By then the baby's neck is able to withstand jolts and not sustain an injury. Bicycle carriers should not be used before a baby is one year old. Developmentally, children are just learning to sit unsupported around 9 months of age. It is not until this age that infants have developed sufficient bone mass and muscle tone to enable them to sit unsupported with their backs straight.

**If You Are Buying a New Back Carrier**

1. Buy one to match the baby's size and weight. Try it on with the baby in it and check for:
   - enough depth to support the baby's back.
   - leg openings small enough to prevent the baby from slipping out.
   - leg openings big enough to avoid chafing the baby's legs.
2. Look for sturdy materials with strong stitching or large, heavy duty fasteners to prevent the baby from slipping out.
3. Look for a back carrier with padded covering over the metal frame near the baby's face to protect the baby from bumps.

**Safety Tips**

1. A child may stand up or try to climb out of the carrier. If the back carrier has restraining straps, be sure to use the restraining straps at all times.
2. Be sure the child's fingers are clear of the frame joints when folding the carrier. Check frames for sharp points, edges or rough surfaces.
3. Check the carrier periodically for ripped seams, missing or loose fasteners, frayed seats, or straps. Repair them promptly or discard the carrier.
4. If leaning over or stooping, bend from the knees rather than the waist to prevent the baby from falling out of the back carrier.

## Bassinets & Cradles

The most frequent injury associated with bassinets and cradles involves children falling either when the bottom of the bassinet or cradle breaks or when it tips over or collapses. Suffocation has also been reported in products that are not structurally sound or when pillows or folded quilts were under baby.

**If You Are Buying a Bassinet or Cradle**

1. Look for one with a sturdy bottom and a wide, stable base.
2. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines on the appropriate weight and size of babies who can safely use the bassinet or cradle.
3. Check to make sure that spaces between spindles are no larger than 2-3/8 in. (60 mm).

**Safety Tips**

1. Check screws and bolts periodically to see if they are tight.
2. If the product has legs that fold for storage, make sure that effective locks are provided to ensure that the legs do not accidentally fold while in use.
3. Mattresses and padding should fit snugly and be firm and smooth. Never use pillows.
4. Decorative bows and ribbons should be trimmed short and stitched securely to prevent strangulation.
5. Swinging cradles should have a way to keep them from swinging once a baby is asleep.

# Carrier Seats

Most injuries associated with carrier seats result from falls: infants falling out of carrier seats, or the carrier seat falling with the infant still sitting in it. The movements of an active infant can cause the carrier seat to move or tip over. Deaths have occurred when carrier seats or bouncers were placed on beds, sofas, or other soft surfaces and then tipped over.

**Safety Tips**

1. The carrier should have a wide, sturdy base for stability.
2. Stay within arm's reach of the baby when the carrier seat is on tables, counters, or other furniture. Never turn your back. Carrier seats slide more easily on slippery surfaces such as glass table tops.
3. If the carrier seat does not already have non-skid feet, attach rough surfaced adhesive strips to the underside.
4. Always use the safety belts and keep them snug.
5. If the carrier seat contains wire supporting devices which snap on the back, check for security. These can pop out causing the carrier seat to collapse.
6. Never place a carrier seat on soft surfaces such as beds or sofas/the carrier seat may tip over and the baby may strangle or suffocate.
7. REMEMBER—A carrier seat is not always an infant car seat, and should never be used in an automobile unless it is labeled for that purpose.

# Hook-on Chairs

Hook-on chairs are used as substitutes for high chairs and are attached to the edge of a table. The Commission has reports of children either falling out of these chairs or dislodging the chair from the table.

**Safety Tips**

1. Do not place the chair where the child's feet can reach table supports, benches, or chairs, to push off from and dislodge the chair from the table.
2. The restraining straps should be easy to use and always fastened around the child when in the chair.
3. After clamping the chair to the table, check its security by pulling backwards on the chair.
4. Don't leave a child unattended.
5. Never use hook-on chairs on glass top, single pedestal or unstable tables.

# Changing Tables

Most injuries associated with changing tables occur when children fall from the changing table to the floor.

**Safety Tip**

Look for a table with safety straps and always use them. In the instant it takes to turn for diapers and pins, an active baby can roll over and fall. Remember, just because you are using the safety straps it does not mean that you can leave your child unattended.

# Pacifiers

In 1977, the Commission issued a regulation for the safety of pacifiers. Among other requirements, the regulation says that:

- Pacifiers must be strong enough to not separate into small pieces on which a baby could choke or suffocate.
- Pacifier guards or shields must be large enough and firm enough to prevent the pacifier from being drawn entirely into a baby's mouth.
- Pacifier guards or shields must have ventilation holes.
- Pacifiers cannot be sold with a ribbon, string, cord, or yarn attached, and must be labeled with the statement: "Warning—Do Not Tie Pacifier Around Child's Neck as it Presents a Strangulation Danger."

Although the regulation has helped to reduce the number of accidents involving pacifiers, the Commission still receives reports of infants strangling on pacifier cords or ribbons tied around their necks. Children have caught pacifier cords on crib corner posts, crib toys and gyms, pieces of furniture, and even doorknobs.

**Safety Tips**

1. REMEMBER, NEVER HANG ANYTHING AROUND YOUR BABY'S NECK.
2. Pacifiers may deteriorate with age, exposure to food, sunlight, etc. Inspect them frequently and discard immediately if you notice a change in texture, tears, holes or weakening.

# Strollers & Carriages

Deaths have resulted when infants were left to sleep in strollers with the backrest reclined to the carriage position. The infants moved (wriggled) feet first towards the front of the stroller and, when their bodies passed through the opening between the handrest (grab bar) and front edge of the seat, they became trapped by the head and strangled.

**If You Are Buying a Stroller or Carriage**

1. If you choose a stroller that has a handrest (grab bar) at the front of the seat, make sure the opening between grab bar and seat can be closed when it is used in the reclined carriage position.
2. If a stroller has a shopping basket for carrying packages, it should be low on the back of the stroller and in front of (or directly over) the rear wheels. Hanging pocketbooks or shopping bags over handles may cause tipping.
3. Check the seat belt to make sure it is strong and durable, fits snugly around your child, and can be easily fastened and unfastened. Use the seat belt each time you place the baby in the stroller.
4. Make sure that the brake is convenient to operate and actually locks the wheels. Brakes on two wheels provide an extra measure of safety.

**Safety Tips**

1. Close the opening between handrest (grab bar) and seat when using a stroller in the reclined carriage position.
2. When folding or unfolding a stroller, keep your child away from it. Children's fingers have been amputated in parts of the folding mechanism.
3. Always secure the seat belt.
4. Never leave a child unattended in a stroller, especially when the baby is asleep.
5. A stroller is not a toy. Never allow children to use one as a plaything.
6. Never use a pillow, folded quilt, or blanket as a mattress in a stroller or carriage.

NEVER leave a child unattended in a stroller because the child may slip into a leg opening, become entrapped by the head, and die.

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# General Household Tips

1. Other children's products: Drawstrings on children's clothing pose strangulation and entanglement hazards. Hood or neck drawstrings can strangle a child if they get caught on such items as playground equipment or cribs. Remove drawstrings from hood and the neck area of outerwear including jackets and sweatshirts. CPSC recommends that consumers purchase children's outerwear with alternative closures, such as snaps, buttons, or Velcro, instead of long, loose drawstrings.

2. Dressers and shelves: Young children can be killed when furniture tips over. These children can climb on a lower drawer that has been pulled out and use it as a step. This can cause the dresser to tip over. Use latches on lower drawers to ensure that drawers are not opened by young children or use angle braces or anchors to secure furniture to a wall.

3. Toys: Babies use their mouths to learn about the world around them. At two months old they can usually grip small objects. Keep tiny objects out of reach of your baby, especially SMALL BALLS, MARBLES and BALLOONS. Smooth round objects present the highest risk of choking. Uninflated balloons and balloon pieces can easily be inhaled into the lungs. Be sure to check the labeling on the toy for the appropriate age for safe use.

4. To prevent poisoning: Children may try to eat cake deodorizers used in pails (such as diaper pails). Keep containers that use these deodorizers securely closed. Child-resistant packaging is not child proof. Keep all medicines, iron-containing vitamins and household cleaning products, including those with child-resistant packaging, locked away from children. Keep poisonous plants out of children's reach.

5. To prevent burns, other injuries: Use your stove's back burners and keep pot handles turned to the back of the stove. Lock up knives, matches, cigarette lighters and plastic bags away from children.

6. Do not place plastic climbing equipment indoors on hard surfaces. Falls on cement, tile, and other hard floors, even covered with carpet, can result in serious head injury and death. Use these only outdoors on shock-absorbing surfaces such as mulch or sand. Grass is not considered a shock-absorbing surface.

7. Fire hazards: Install smoke detectors on each floor of your home, especially near sleeping areas; test them on a regular basis and change the batteries each year, or when a "chirping" sound is heard.

8. Electric hazards: Use safety plugs to cover electrical outlets, and keep all loose hanging wires and appliance cords out of reach of children. Use ground fault circuit interrupters devices to protect outlets in basement, kitchen, bathroom, garage, and outdoor.

9. Carbon monoxide poisoning: Make sure all fuel burning appliances are properly installed, used, and maintained annually at the start of the heating season. Do not leave vehicles running in garages. Install at least one CO detector that meets the requirement of the most recent UL standard.

10. For information on children's car seats and Auto Safety Hotline, contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1-800-424-9393, 202-366-0123 (Washington, DC area only). Its Website page is www.nhtsa.dot.gov

11. CPSC has many other publications that have more information about these tips. Please see the back page of this booklet for information on how to request other publications, or visit our Website page (www.cpsc.gov).

Angle Brace
Anchor
⚠ WARNING
Young children can be killed when furniture tips over.
Place TVs on lower furniture, as far back as possible.
Use angle-braces or anchors to secure furniture to wall.

# SAFE NURSERY CHECKLIST

After you have read the information in the Safe Nursery Guide, use this checklist as your guide when buying new or secondhand nursery products, or when you evaluate the product now being used by your baby or young child. You may want to add other features to check, or add other children's products.

## Cribs

- ☐ Slats are spaced no more than 2-3/8 inches (60 mm) apart.
- ☐ No slats are missing, loose or cracked.
- ☐ Mattress fits snugly – no more than two fingers width between edge of mattress and cribside.
- ☐ Mattress support is securely attached to the headboard and footboard.
- ☐ Corner posts are no higher than 1/16 of an inch (1-1/2 mm).
- ☐ No cutouts in top edge of headboard and footboard.
- ☐ Drop-side latches cannot be easily released by a baby.
- ☐ Drop-side latches securely hold side in raised position.
- ☐ All screws, bolts and other hardware are present and tight.

## Crib Toys

- ☐ No strings or cords should dangle into the crib.
- ☐ Crib gym or mobile has label warning to remove from crib when child can push up on hands and knees or reaches 5 months of age, whichever comes first. *Note: Some mobiles have two parts: one without strings, like a music box, that can stay on the crib, and the mobile that should be removed from the crib.*
- ☐ Components of toys are too large to be a choking hazard.

## Gates and Enclosures

- ☐ Openings in gate are too small to entrap a child's head or neck.
- ☐ Gate has a pressure bar or other fastener that will resist forces exerted by a child.

## High Chairs

- ☐ There is a "crotch" strap that must be used when restraining a child in a high chair.
- ☐ High chair has restraining straps that are independent of the tray.
- ☐ Tray locks securely.
- ☐ Buckles on straps are easy to fasten and unfasten.
- ☐ High chair has a wide base for stability.
- ☐ Caps or plugs on tubing are firmly attached and cannot be pulled off and choke a child.
- ☐ Folding high chair has effective locking device.

## Playpens

- ☐ Playpens or travel cribs have top rails that will automatically lock when lifted into the normal use position.
- ☐ Playpen does NOT have a rotating hinge in the center of the top rails.
- ☐ Drop-side mesh playpen or mesh crib has warning label about never leaving a side in the down position.
- ☐ Playpen mesh has small weave (less than 1/4 inch openings).
- ☐ Mesh has no tears or loose threads.
- ☐ Mesh is securely attached to top rail and floorplate.
- ☐ Wooden playpen has slats spaced no more than 2-3/8 inches (60 mm) apart.

## Walkers

- ☐ Walker has safety features to help prevent a fall down stairs.

## Back Carriers

- ☐ Leg openings are small enough to prevent child from slipping out.
- ☐ Leg openings are large enough to prevent chafing.
- ☐ Frame joints in the folding mechanism.
- ☐ Carrier has padded covering over metal frame near baby's face.

## Rattles/Squeeze Toys/Teethers

- ☐ Rattles, squeeze toys and teethers have handles too large to lodge in baby's throat.
- ☐ Squeeze toys do not contain a squeaker that could detach and choke a baby.
- ☐ Avoid rattles with ball shaped ends.

## Toy Chests

- ☐ Toy chest has no latch to entrap child within the chest.
- ☐ Toy chest has spring-loaded lid support that will not require periodic adjustment and will support the lid in any position to prevent lid slam.
- ☐ Chest has ventilation holes or spaces in front or sides, or under lid.

## Bassinets and Cradles

- ☐ Bassinet/cradle has a sturdy bottom and a wide base for stability.
- ☐ Bassinet/cradle has smooth surfaces — no protruding staples or other hardware that could injure the baby.
- ☐ Legs have strong, effective locks to prevent folding while in use.
- ☐ Mattress is firm and fits snugly.
- ☐ Wood or metal cradles have slats spaced no more than 2-3/8in. (60 mm) apart.

## Carrier Seats

- ☐ Carrier seat has a wide, sturdy base for stability.
- ☐ Carrier has non-skid feet to prevent slipping.
- ☐ Supporting devices lock securely.
- ☐ Carrier seat has a crotch and waist strap.
- ☐ Buckle or strap is easy to use.

## Changing Tables

- ☐ Table has safety straps to prevent falls.
- ☐ Table has drawers or shelves that are easily accessible without leaving the baby unattended.

## Hook-on Chairs

- ☐ Chair has restraining straps.
- ☐ Chair has a clamp that locks onto the table for added security.
- ☐ Caps or plugs on tubing are firmly attached and cannot be pulled off to choke child.
- ☐ Hook-on chair has a warning never to place chair where child can push off with feet.

## Pacifiers

- ☐ Pacifier has no ribbons, string, cord or yarn attached.
- ☐ Shield is large enough and firm enough so it cannot fit into child's mouth.
- ☐ Guard or shield has ventilation holes so baby can breath if shield goes into mouth.
- ☐ Pacifier nipple has no holes or tears that might cause it to break off in baby's mouth.

## Strollers and Carriages

- ☐ Stroller has wide base to prevent tipping.
- ☐ Seat belt and crotch strap are securely attached to frame.
- ☐ Seat belt buckle is easy to use.
- ☐ Brakes securely lock the wheel(s).
- ☐ Shopping basket is low on the back and located directly over or in front of the wheels.
- ☐ When used in carriage position, leg hole openings can be closed.

**For further information, write:**

# U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Washington, D.C. 20207

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission protects the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death from 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury and for information on CPSC's fax-on-demand service, call CPSC's hotline at (800) 638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at (800) 638-8270. To order a press release through fax-on-demand, call (301) 504-0051 from the handset of your fax machine and enter the release number. Consumers can obtain recall information at CPSC's web site at http://www.cpsc.gov or via Internet gopher services at cpsc.gov. Consumers can report product hazards to info@cpsc.gov.

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